Pak-Saudi Arabia pact on Nuclear co-operation

1013. SHRI AMAR SINGH:
SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA:
SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI:
SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA:
SHRI RUMANDLA RAAMACHANDRAYYA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the secret deal concluded by Pakistan and Saudi Arabia on nuclear co-operation that would provide the Saudis with nuclear weapons technology in exchange of cheap oil;

(b) to what extent this is likely to affect India's security and regional balance; and

(c) the steps proposed to be taken by Government in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) Government have seen reports regarding an understanding between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia on transfer of nuclear technology in exchange for oil; and denials thereof by Pakistan and Saudi Arabia.

(b) and (c) Government carefully monitors such developments and remains committed to taking all necessary steps to effectively safeguard India's security based on a realistic assessment of the country's security environment.

Indo-Bangla relations

1014. SHRI MATILAL SARKAR: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the points on which the agreement have been arrived at between India and Bangladesh to make the relations from easy to easier;

(b) whether it is a fact that Bharat-Bangladesh Bus services do not give a good experience because of high fare; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the steps proposed by Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL

AFFAIRS (SHRI VINOD KHANNA): (a) Relations between India and Bangladesh cover diverse areas and agreements to strengthen bilateral ties have been signed between the two countries in the areas of, *inter alia,* trade, river water sharing, land boundary, inland water transit, road and rail transport, visa, agriculture and cultural and educational exchanges. A bus service between Kolkata and Dhaka commenced in 1999 and the Agartala-Dhaka bus service was inaugurated in September this year.

(b) and (c) The bus services have been affected by the imposition by Bangladesh of a tax on foreign travel by land. The Government of Bangladesh has been requested to withdraw the tax.

Pakistani efforts to Mobilize support on Kashmir

1015. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Pakistan has constituted a 26 Member Committee of Parliamentarians to mobilize world opinion in favour of their stand on Kashmir;

(b) if so, what steps have been taken by Government not only to contain evil designs of Pakistan but also garner support for independence of PoK; and

(c) what preparations are under way?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) Government are aware of various measures taken by Pakistan to project an inaccurate picture of the Jammu and Kashmir issue.

(b) and (c) It has been the consistent and principled stand of the Government that the State of Jammu and Kashmir is an integral part of India, and Pakistan is in illegal and forcible occupation of a part of the State. The issue that remains to be resolved in Jammu and Kashmir is the vacation by Pakistan of the area under its illegal occupation. India remains committed to resolving all outstanding issues with Pakistan bilaterally and peacefully in accordance with the Simla Agreement and the Lahore Declaration.